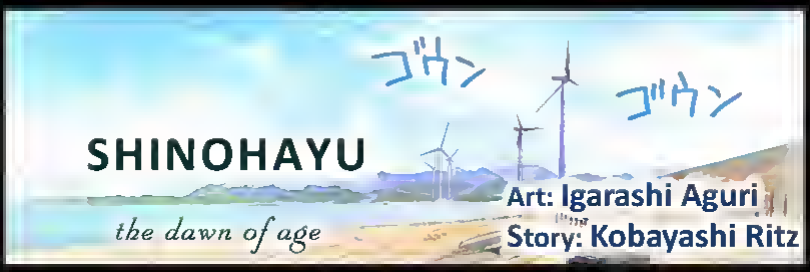
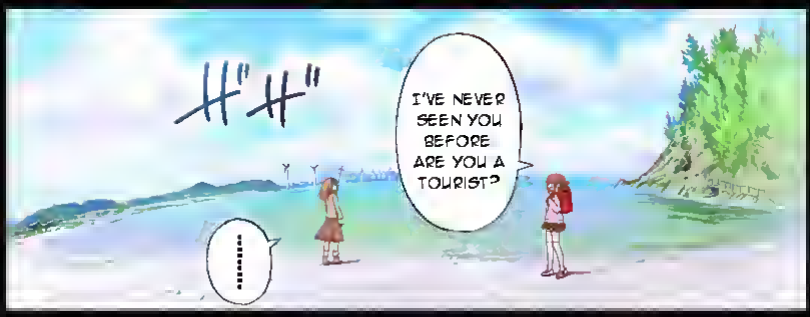
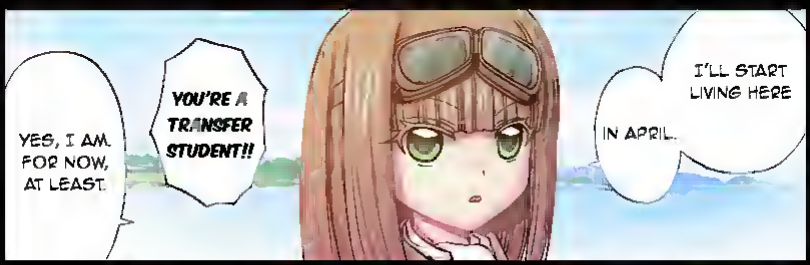
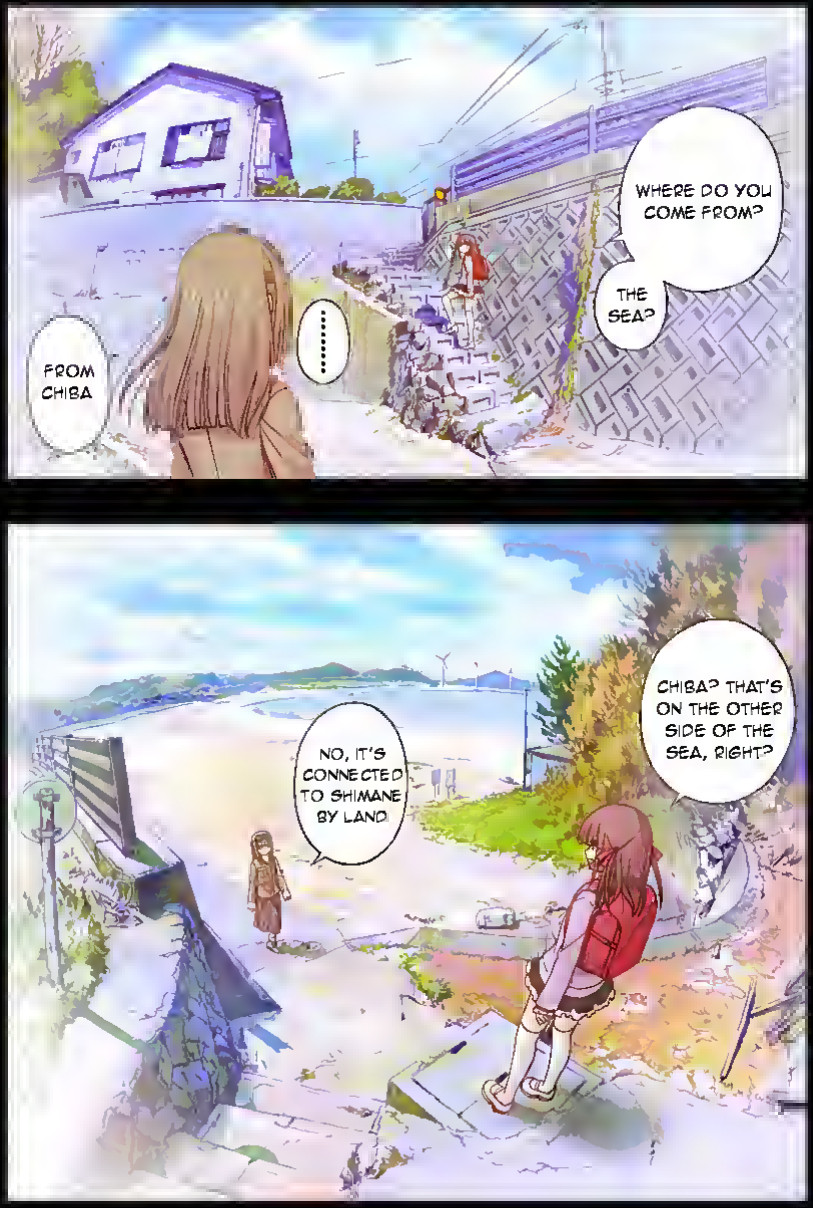






THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN KOMOSAWA MIDDLE 1ST YEAR STUDENT MUKUNOKI CHIHIRO AND 2ND YEAR STUDENT YUKINAGA YUZUHA.

Chapter 44:
Strong Opponents


WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?
THE SEA?
.....
FROM CHIBA
CHIBA? THAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SEA, RIGHT?
NO, IT'S CONNECTED TO SHIMANE BY LAND

WANT ME TO GIVE YOU A TOUR OF THE AREA?
NOT REALLY
SEE THAT MOUNTAIN OVER THERE?
THAT'S MOUNT ASARIFUJI.
I WENT THERE ON A TRIP AND CLIMBED IT
THAT ISLAND IS CALLED BIG ISLAND.
IT'S A PRETTY SMALL ISLAND THOUGH.
.....
THERE'S A SHRINE ON THE ISLAND.
EVERY YEAR, DURING THE SUMMER FESTIVAL, WE BRING THE GODDESS FROM THERE
THE SUMMER FESTIVAL ...
UH-HUH.

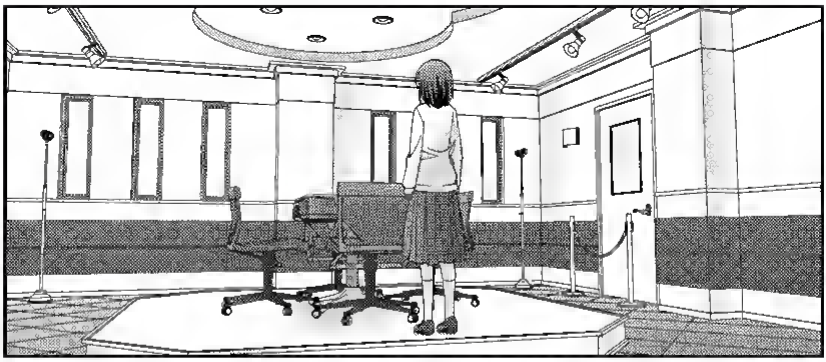
IN GOTSU AND OTHER NEARBY TOWNS, THEY HAVE A FESTIVAL AFTER OBON.
BUT HERE, WE HAVE A SUMMER FESTIVAL.
WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS, EH~?
WELL, THIS IS THE ONLY AREA WITH FISHING VILLAGES,
AND OTHER TOWNS HAVE FESTIVALS OF AGRICULTURE SO...
THAT'S PRETTY MUCH IT, RIGHT?
AMAZING... YOU KNOW SO MUCH...
NO IDEA IF YOU'RE RIGHT OR NOT THOUGH.
YOU DON'T KNOW...
THE COAST IS SHALLOW SO IT'S PERFECT FOR SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN.
THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH BEING EASY TO LIVE IN.
IS IT EASY TO LIVE HERE?

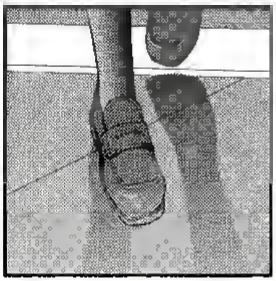
DOES IT SNOW?
WINTERS ARE PRETTY HARSH, I GUESS.
I'VE NEVER LIVED ANYWHERE ELSE SO I WOULDN'T KNOW.
SEEMS SERIOUS.
THEY MADE THIS WALL TO BLOCK IT.
IT'S THE SALT AND THE SAND MORE THAN THE SNOW. THE WIND IS VERY STRONG.
HMM
ANYWAY, IF YOU HAVE ANY TROUBLE, JUST LET ME KNOW.
I'LL PROTECT YOU
LIKE THIS WALL
THAT LAST PART WAS UNNECESSARY.

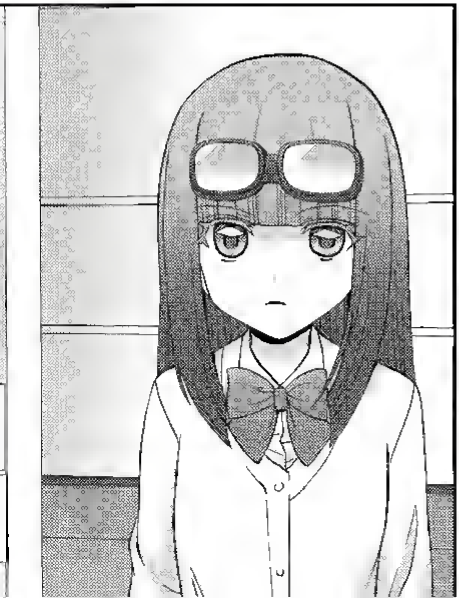
BUT YOU MUST BE IN 3RD YEAR OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OR SO, RIGHT?
I'M IN 5TH YEAR, AND NEXT YEAR I'LL BE IN 6TH!
ONE YEAR BELOW ME...
WELL, I GUESS I'M PRETTY SHORT
BUT YOU CAN COUNT ON ME

BECAUSE I'M STRONG.
TIME TO GO
YUZU!
At the time, I remember thinking "What's she going on about?"

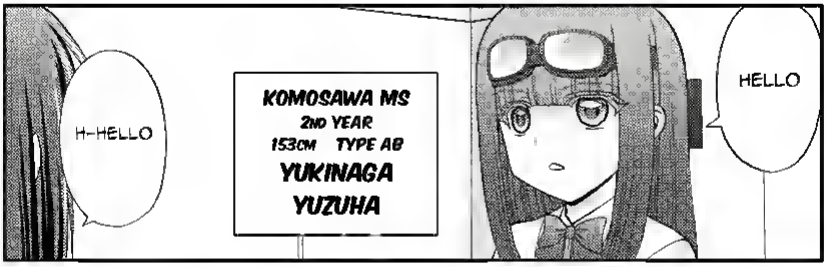
YEAH
I'M HERE TO BACK YOU UP, SO GO OUT THERE AND PLAY WITHOUT WORRIES, OK?
I'LL BE COUNTING ON YOU.
.....
ワアア

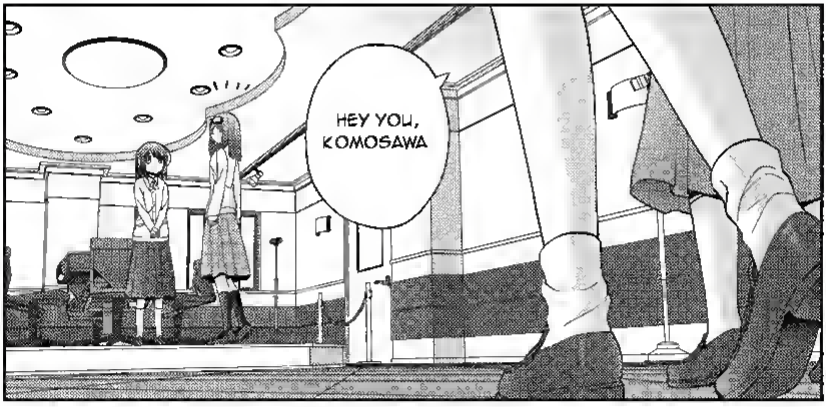






I think her name was... Yukinaga-san.
Komosawa's vanguard... she's the same as in the 1st round.

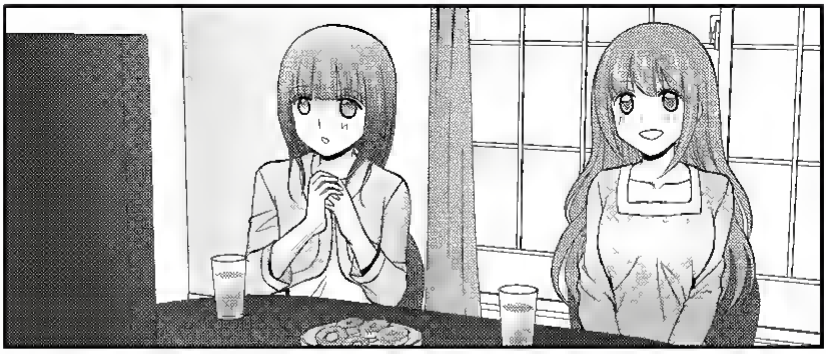

H-HELLO
KOMOSAWA MS
2ND YEAR
153CM TYPE AB
YUKINAGA
YUZUHA
HELLO

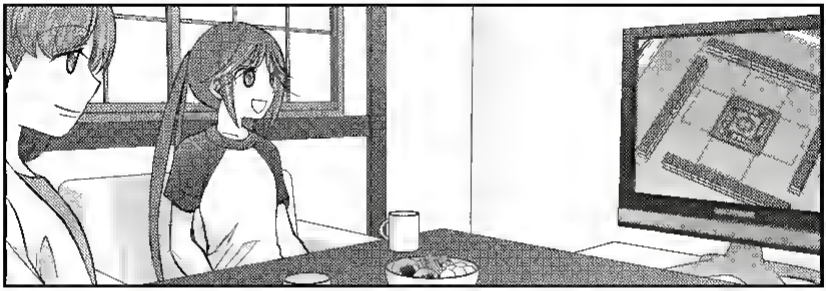

HEY YOU, KOMOSAWA

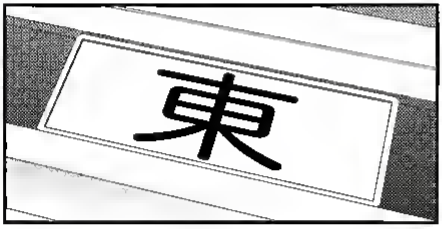
YOU SEEM VERY CONFIDENT FOR BEING ONE OF THE ETERNAL LOSERS FROM IZUMO CITY.
I WON'T LET YOU DO AS YOU PLEASE THIS YEAR

AH... UMM...
WELL, THAT'S TRUE, I GUESS
HUH!?
LOOK WHO'S TALKING! DON'T YOU GET DEFEATED BY KOMOSAWA EVERY YEAR TOO?
NICE TO MEET YOU
NICE TO MEET YOU
NICE TO MEET YOU TOO, PLEASE GO EASY ON ME
I'M GONNA BEAT YOU UP!
YEAH, YEAH!
HIREFURI MS
3RD YEAR
171CM TYPE A
TERADO MAIKO
HIMEBARA MS
3RD YEAR
160CM TYPE O
ISHIHARA YORINA

THIS IS THE NATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL MAHJONG CHAMPIONSHIP!
AND THE FINAL MATCH OF THE SHIMANE TOURNAMENT!!
IS ABOUT TO START!!
IT'S SHINO-CHAN!!
SHE'S ON TV AGAIN!!



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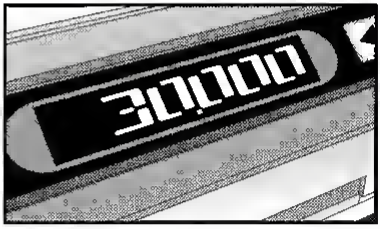
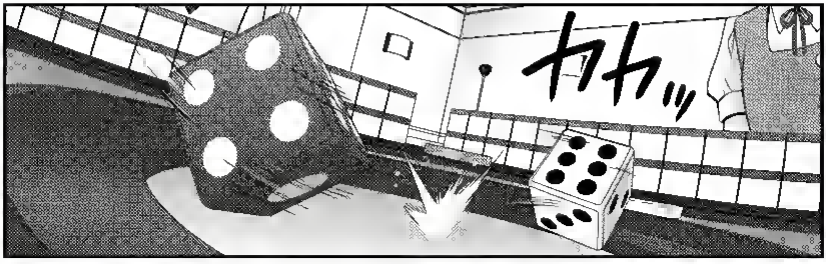
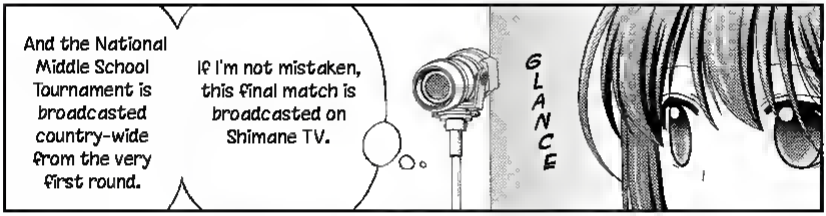
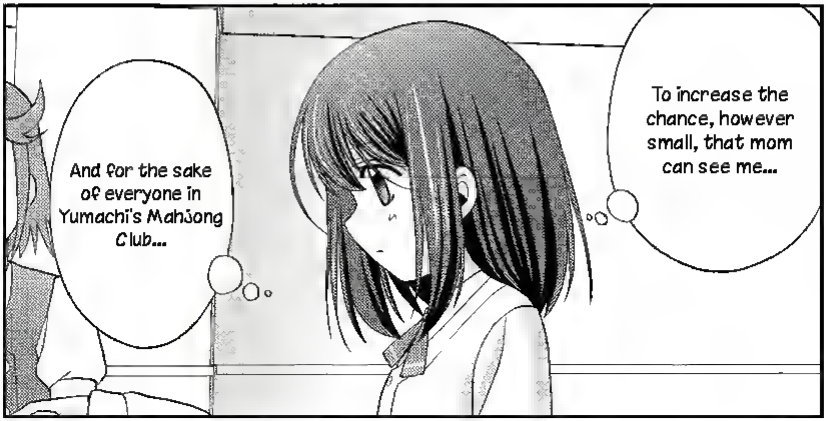
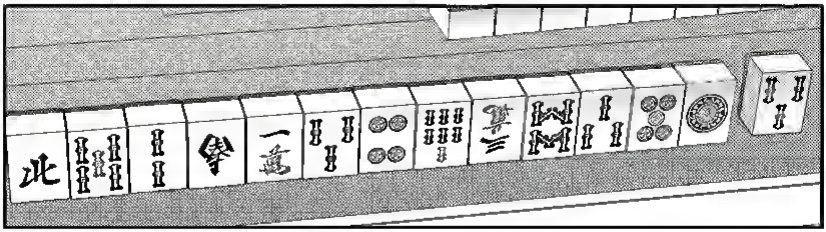


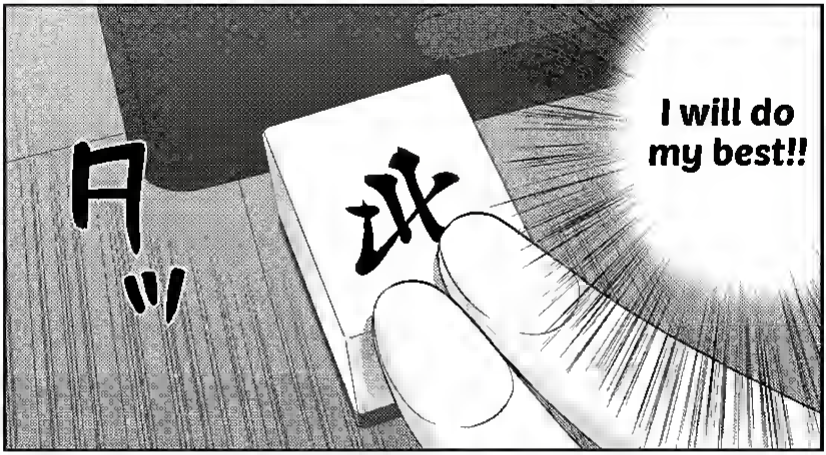

カカッ

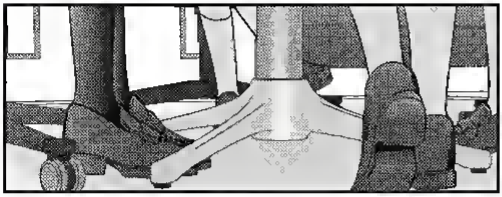
THE MATCH BEGINS!!
ワア

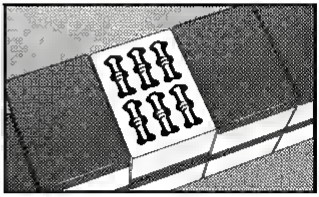

And the National Middle School Tournament is broadcasted country-wide from the very first round.
If I'm not mistaken, this final match is broadcasted on Shimane TV.
GLANCE

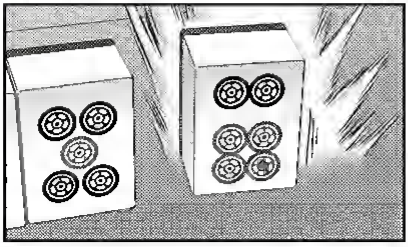

And for the sake of everyone in Yumachi's Mahjong Club...
To increase the chance, however small, that mom can see me...

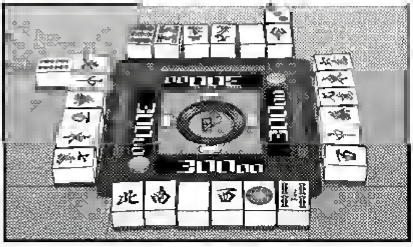



I will do my best!!





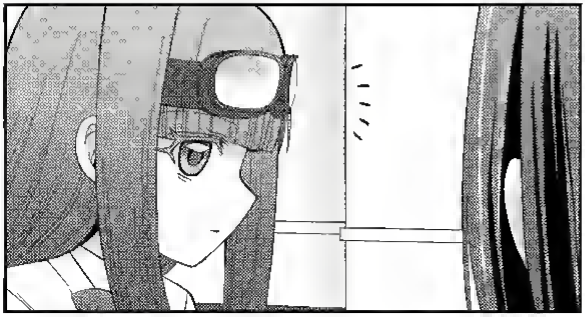


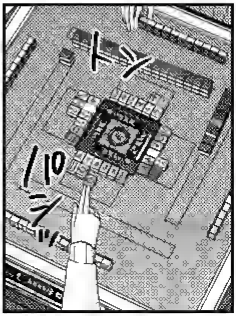


RIICHI

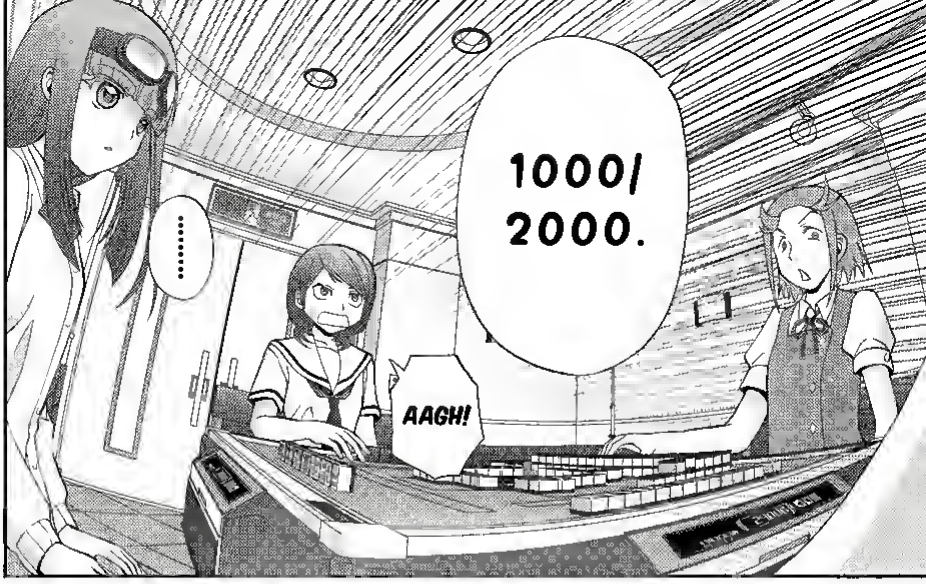
But wasn't she a second half type?
She was 3rd in the national elementary tournament

OH-
QUICK, AREN'T YOU?




トン

TSUMO


1000/
2000.
.....
AAGH!

This girl...

?

East 2
RIICHI!!
THERE'S NO IPPATSU WITH THESE RULES, DOING THAT IS POINTLESS.
PON
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT

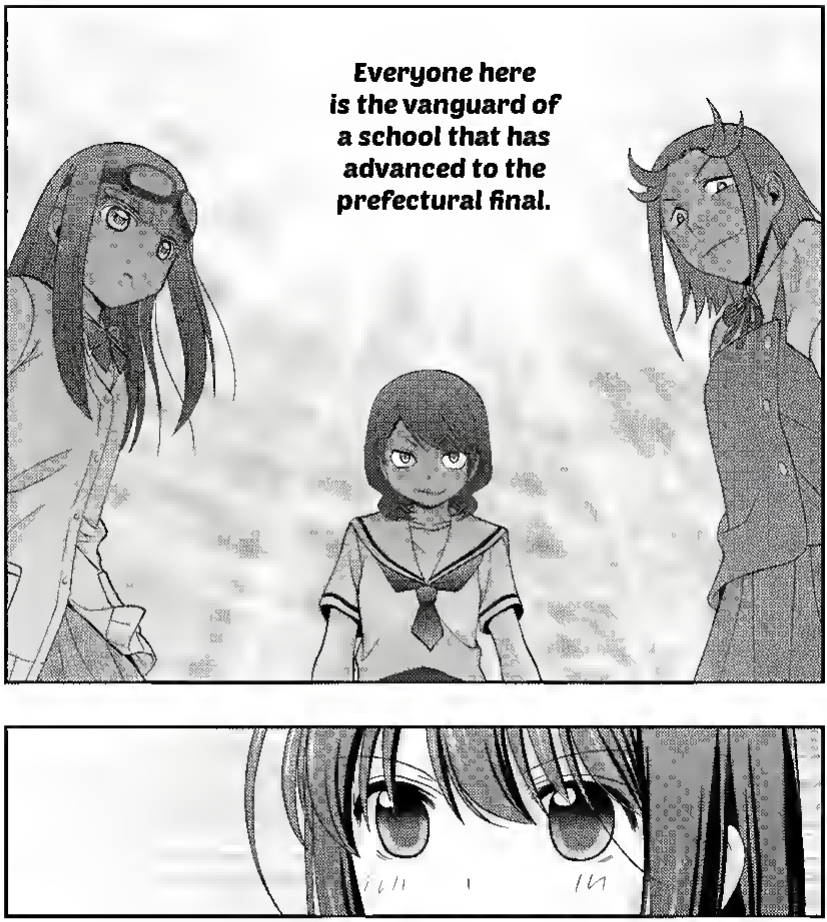
RON
IT'S A CHEAP HAND BUT AT LEAST I'VE WON
1000 POINTS
OH, AND YOUR RIICHI STICK
YOU JERK...
ガシャ

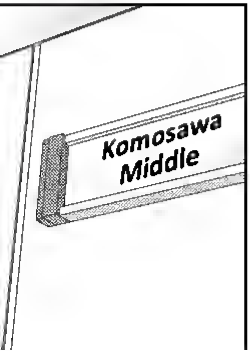
THIS IS ALL THE DATA WE HAVE ON THE 3 SCHOOLS THAT WILL BE YOUR OPPONENTS
They're tough, as expected.

YOU ALL HAVE ACCESS TO THEM, CHECK THE INFO ON YOUR RESPECTIVE OPPONENTS
I ALSO UPLOADED ALL THEIR SCORE SHEETS AND PUT THEM IN A SHARED FOLDER

REALLY!?
WITH THAT CHECKLIST YOU GAVE US A MONTH AGO WITH ALL THE PARTICIPANT SCHOOLS, SOMEHOW WE ALREADY...
SO PLEASE CHECK THE OTHER PLAYERS TOO, IF YOU CAN
THAT'S ASSUMING THE OTHER SCHOOLS DON'T CHANGE THEIR PLAYING ORDER OF COURSE

IF THEY KEEP THE SAME ORDER OF THE 1ST ROUND, KOMOSAWA'S VANGUARD IS THIS GIRL CALLED YUKINAGA-SAN, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT
LAST YEAR, SHE WAS A SUBSTITUTE SO WE DON'T HAVE MUCH DATA ON HER
BUT IN ALL THEIR MATCHES ON PREFECTURAL TOURNAMENTS AND BEYOND, KOMOSAWA'S VANGUARD HAS NEVER BEEN A WEAK PLAYER
The strong 1st year that the reporter mentioned may or may not be Mukunoki-san but...
Since they didn't change the order, Yukinaga should also be pretty tough.
.....





I need to brace myself and press on...!!

MANA-GEEE-R
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE BEST ORDER FOR THE FINA-L?
HMM-?

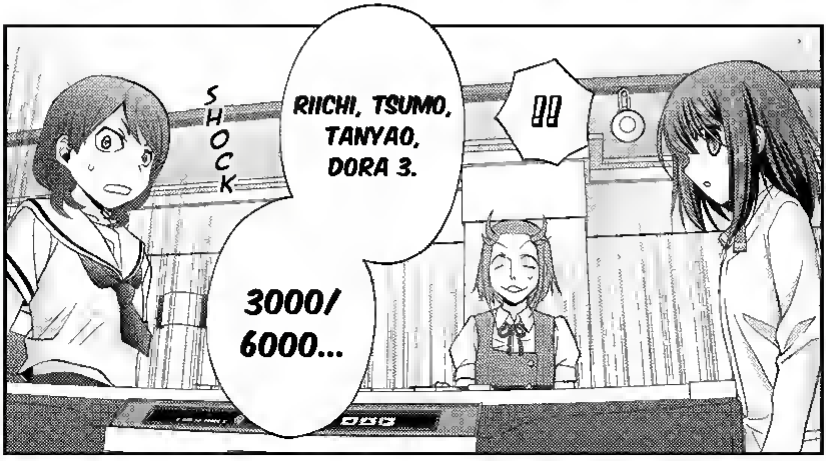
IN THE CITY TOURNAMENT, WE USED THE SEMI-REGULARS, EXCEPT FOR THE 3RD YEARS, BECAUSE IT ALSO SERVES AS TRAINING FOR NEXT YEAR
BUT FROM THIS FINAL ONWARDS, WE USE THE 5 STRONGEST
……

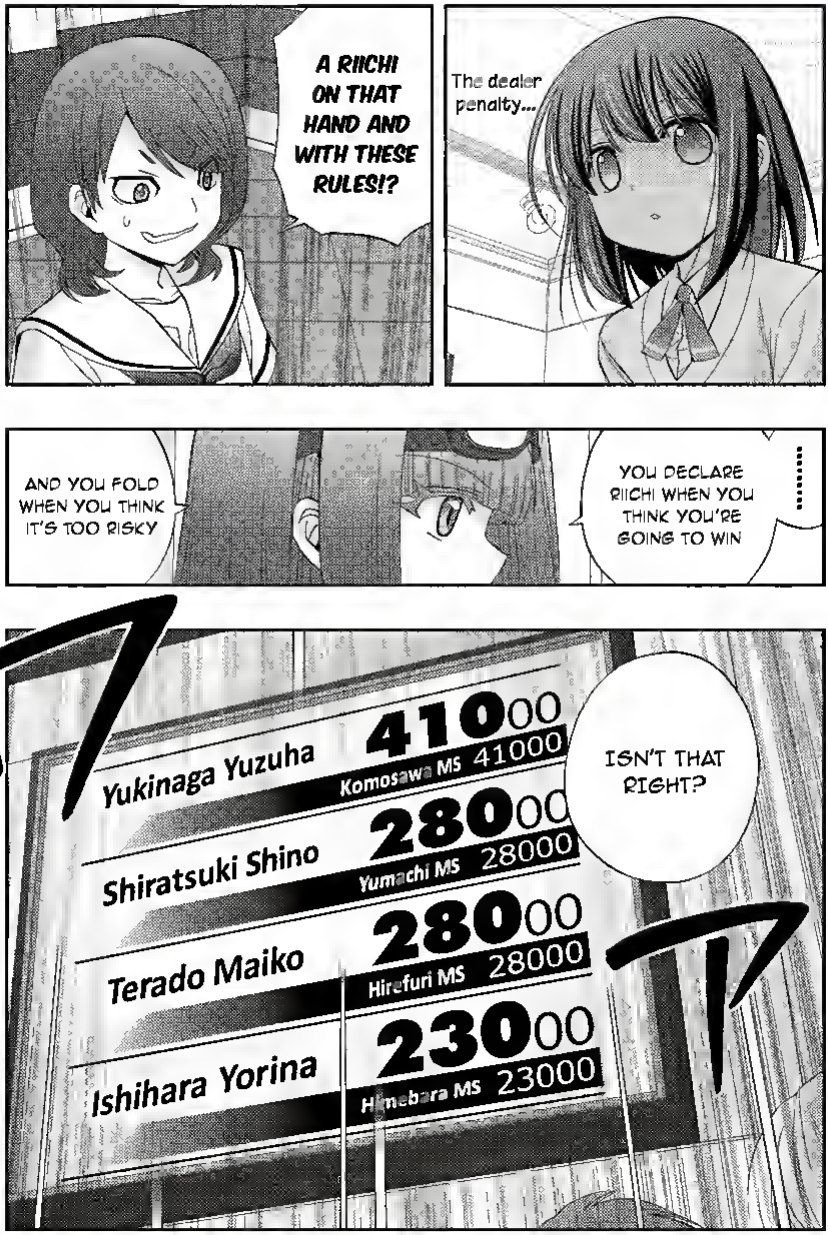
WHY DO YOU A-SK? DO YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAI-NTS?
AH, I SEE
ME BEING CAPTAIN

WE SHOULD TRY TO END THIS MATCH AT THE LIEUTENANT, LIKE IN THE 1ST ROUND IF POSSIBLE
BUT THEN I WON'T EVEN GET THE CHANCE TO PLAY-
IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT WE'LL BE THE WINNERS OF THIS PREFECTURAL TOURNAMENT

AND WE DON'T WANT TO REVEAL ANY DATA TO OUR RIVALS IN THE NATIONAL TOURNAMENT.
SO TO HAVE A BETTER ADVANTAGE AT THE NATIONALS,
YOU, CHIHIRO, HAVE TO BE THE CAPTAIN.
WHAT IF WE REACH THE CAPTAIN MATCH? WHAT SHOULD I DO THEN, EH-?
GO ALL OUT.
FINISH IT ON EAST 2 OR EAST 3.
IT'S BETTER NOT TO PROLONG IT.
I WANT ALL OF YOU TO GO ALL OUT...

AND BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF THOSE 3 SCHOOLS!!
TSUMO ...


SHOCK
RIICHI, TSUMO, TANYAO, DORA 3.
!!
3000/ 6000...


A RIICHI ON THAT HAND AND WITH THESE RULES!?
The dealer penalty...
AND YOU FOLD WHEN YOU THINK IT'S TOO RISKY
YOU DECLARE RIICHI WHEN YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO WIN
.....
Yukinaga Yuzuha 41000
Komosawa MS 41000
Shiratsuki Shino 28000
Yumachi MS 28000
Terado Maiko 28000
Hirefuri MS 28000
Ishihara Yorina 23000
Himebara MS 23000
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

THE FINAL'S VANGUARD MATCH HAS NOTHING BUT STRONG PLAYERS FROM NOTHING BUT STRONG TEAMS. SHIRATSUKI SHINO IS OPENLY ENJOYING HER "YOUTH".

Continues May 25